General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 July 2005

Fifty-ninth session
Agenda item 156

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/59/L.62 and Add.1)*]

59/309. Multilingualism

The General Assembly,

Recognizing that the United Nations pursues multilingualism as a means of promoting, protecting and preserving diversity of languages and cultures globally,

Also recognizing that genuine multilingualism promotes unity in diversity and international understanding,

Recalling its resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992, by which it adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[1] in particular its article 27 concerning the rights of persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities,

Also recalling its resolutions 2 (I) of 1 February 1946, 2480 B (XXIII) of 21 December 1968, 42/207 C of 11 December 1987, 50/11 of 2 November 1995, 52/23 of 25 November 1997, 54/64 of 6 December 1999, 56/262 of 15 February 2002, 59/126 B of 10 December 2004 and 59/265 and 59/266 of 23 December 2004,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General[2] and the report of the Joint Inspection Unit;[3]

2. *Also takes note* of the appointment of a new coordinator for multilingualism;

3. *Underlines* the need for full implementation of the resolutions establishing language arrangements for the official languages of the United Nations and the working languages of the Secretariat;

4. *Emphasizes* the paramount importance of the equality of the six official languages of the United Nations;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to ensure, through the provision of documentation services and meeting and publishing services under conference management, including high-quality translation and interpretation,

---

[1] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[2] A/58/363.

[3] See A/58/93.

effective multilingual communication among representatives of Member States in intergovernmental organs and members of expert bodies of the United Nations equally in all the official languages of the United Nations;

6. *Notes with satisfaction* the willingness of the Secretariat to encourage staff members, in formal meetings with interpretation services, to use any of the six official languages of which they have a command;

7. *Recalls* its resolution 59/266, in which it reaffirmed the need to respect the equality of each of the two working languages of the Secretariat, reaffirms the use of additional working languages in specific duty stations as mandated, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to ensure that vacancy announcements specify the need for either of the working languages of the Secretariat, unless the functions of the post require a specific working language;

8. *Also recalls* that in its resolution 59/266 it requested the Secretary-General to continue to take the steps necessary to ensure that the Galaxy e-staffing system was available in both of the working languages of the Organization;

9. *Encourages* United Nations staff members to continue to use actively existing training facilities to acquire and enhance their proficiency in one or more of the official languages of the United Nations;

10. *Recalls* its resolution 59/265, in which it reaffirmed the provisions relating to conference services of its resolutions on multilingualism;

11. *Also recalls* its resolution 59/126 B, and emphasizes the importance of multilingualism in United Nations public relations and information activities;

12. *Reaffirms* the need to achieve full parity among the six official languages on the United Nations website;

13. *Takes note with appreciation* of the work done by the United Nations information centres, including the regional United Nations information centres, in favour of the publication of United Nations information materials and the translation of important documents into languages other than the official languages of the United Nations, with a view to reaching the widest possible spectrum of audiences and extending the United Nations message to all the corners of the world in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization;

14. *Welcomes* the decision by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 17 November 1999 that 21 February should be proclaimed "International Mother Language Day", and calls upon Member States and the Secretariat to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by peoples of the world;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-first session on the measures that can be taken by international organizations within the United Nations system in order to strengthen the protection, promotion and preservation of all languages, in particular languages spoken by persons belonging to linguistic minorities and languages facing extinction;

16. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-first session a comprehensive report on the implementation of its resolutions on multilingualism, including the implications of the present resolution;

17. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-first session the item entitled "Multilingualism".

104th plenary meeting
22 June 2005